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Theoretical and Organizational Aspects of Professional and Psychophysiological Selection of Military Servicemen in Armed Forces of Ukraine.

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The development of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and transition to the professional basis of recruitment of military units pose the specific demands to psychophysiological and moral-psychological condition of the officers. The process of reforming the Armed Forces of Ukraine, one element of which is the reduction of the number of servicemen while still maintaining adequate defensive capability of the country should be implemented by using the science-based methodology of studying and practical application of the "human factor" concept, its role and place in estimation of fighting capability of military units. Obviously, the further perfection of battle systems and facilities should be connected to psychophysiological provision of training and battle activity of the troops.

In order to accomplish these goals, a system of professional selection of the officers was established in the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The primary elements of this system are the following (Figure 1) :

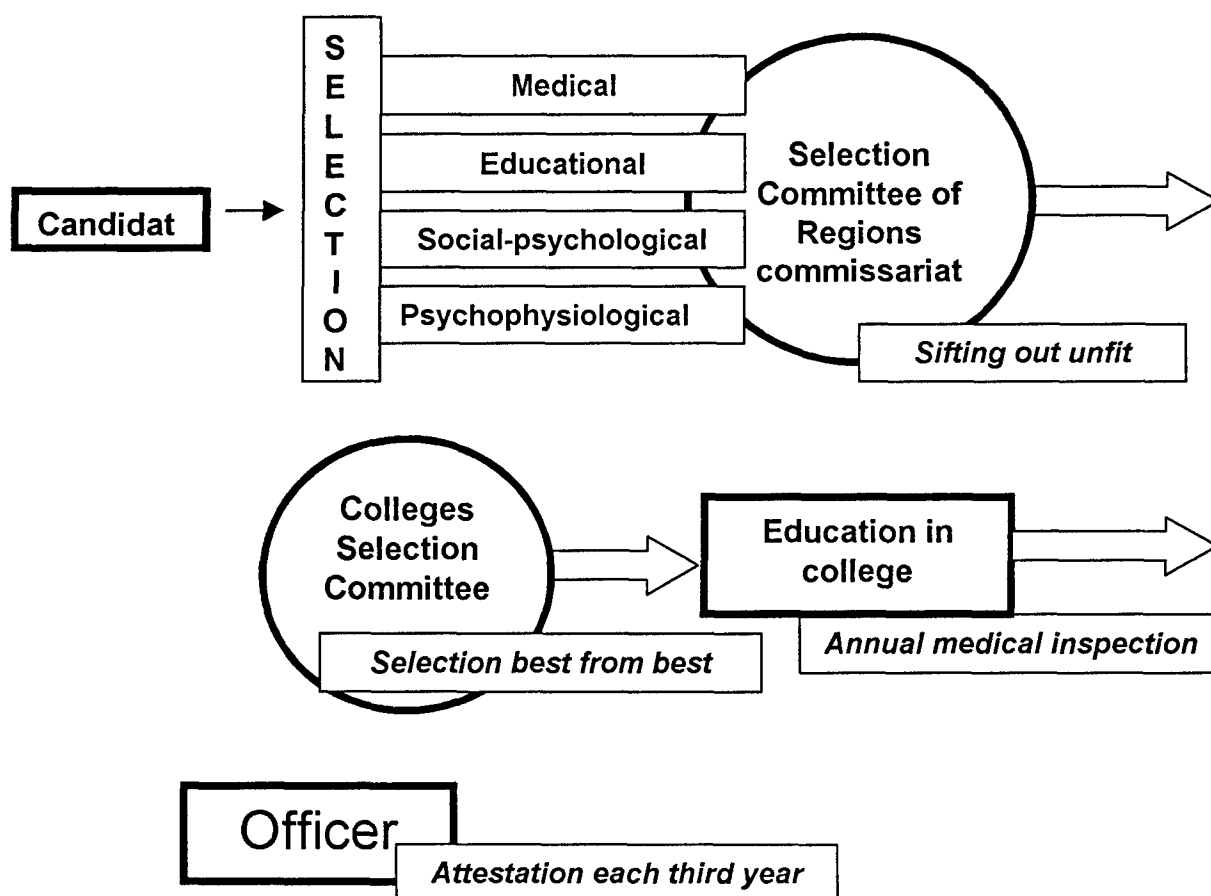


Figure 1. Algorithm of Professional Officer Selection

The Medical Selection consists of revealing those persons whose health condition and level of physical development allow successfully and timely, within the strictly regulated terms, to master the specialty, for which the selection was conducted. Further it allows for the selection of the military officers that are reliable and efficient in carrying out their service functions throughout the extended time period without any special health deterioration.

The Educational Selection is oriented towards revealing the persons, whose level of knowledge would ensure successful training in the selected specialty.

The Socio-psychological Selection is intended for determination of those socially stipulated psychological, moral, and ethical qualities of the prospective officers, which reflect their readiness and aspiration to carry out their service functions in any situations, including the extreme ones and which are necessary for successful work in a group.

The Psychophysiological Selection determines the extent of development of set of those individual abilities, psychophysiological properties, and opportunities of the organism of the person, which conform to the requirements posed by the elected military specialty.

The methodological basis of professional psychophysiological selection is based on the theory of individual psychophysiological differences between the individuals and assumes optimal distribution of the candidates to different military specialties in consideration of impartial assessments of their abilities, personal qualities, and properties of the human organism.

The professional selection of officers for the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine represents a system of organized practical conventions oriented towards the improvement of the officers recruitment for military units, reduction of time required for training, instruction, and classes, reduction of the number of those screened and deemed unsuitable for service in the Armed Forces. This professional selection raise the stability of military units, tangible resource saving, conservation of health and professional longevity, the broad personal development and satisfaction with work.

For deciding these problems is executing the regular gathering of information on personal qualities of the candidates and experts demonstrated in various situations in life and service situations, at the different levels of training or professional activity. Normally, psychophysiological inspection is implemented in several stages, the scope and content vary (Figure 2).

The experience gained by the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the field of implementing the professional selection of the officers reveals that the expected social effect of selected activities may be achieved only on the condition of the complex approach to its theoretical development and consequent practical use. The comprehensiveness of our approach provides for availability of the following four basic aspects:

- Scientific and Methodical
- Organizational
- Staff
- Material and Technical

Preliminary Selection

- Selection of enlisted for a service in Armed Forces
- Selection of candidates for training in military school

- Medical
 - Social-psychological
 - Educational

Basic Selection

Psychological supervision
on transits to the unit

Selection on duty

The scientific and methodical aspect of professional selection provides the justification of general principles of the estimation and forecasting of the professional suitability, psychobiographic characteristic of activity, justification and development of the activity-posed requirements. Further, it isolates the required body of techniques for determination of the professionally important psychophysiological properties of a person, development of success criteria for training and practical activity, and also development of the guidelines and methodical documents on implementation and perfection of professional selection.

The organizational aspect includes complex interrelated and consistent activities oriented towards implementation of the professional selection. The organizational framework consists of the central managing supervisors and the military executive bodies (slide 6).

The staff provision of professional selection includes preparation of the experts in psychophysiology for the troops, who should be capable to conduct the qualified inspection of the military men and to make reasonable conclusions on their professional adequacy. The selection may be carried out only by the trained experts in psychophysiology, having the appropriate certificate acknowledging their right to conduct the professional selection. Our psychophysiology experts, both practical and social psychologists, are trained at the appropriate faculties of the Ukrainian Military Medical Academy and the Academy of National Defense of Ukraine.

The material and technical provision of professional selection provides for development and creation of hardware psycho-diagnostic facilities, purchase of the required accessories and also the availability of special premises specially equipped for individual and group inspection.

The four basic elements of the system for professional selection of military experts carry out a function of maintaining the practical realization of selection in military bases and educational centers. As a result, the selection system gains the closed-cycle features while keeping all of its elements interconnected.

One of the important professional selection elements is the estimation of its efficiency (slide 7,8,9). This element ensures correctness check of the professional forecasts for the pre-selected persons on the basis of the data from their actual progress during the training or practical activities. Ultimately, the estimation in selection efficiency is socio-economic. It allows to determine practical advantages of introducing the selection system, which in turn is matched to the costs (temporary, material, organizational/staff etc.) to conducting the selection.

In Armed Forces of Ukraine, a number of parameters are applied in order to estimate the efficiency of professional selection, which are divided into two large classes: medical and psychological, and socio-economic. The parameters of the first class reflect the impact of selection on the training progress, efficiency of activity and functional condition of staff, that is defined as "human factor" of fighting capability and fighting readiness of the military units. The estimation of socio-economic parameters of the professional selection efficiency appears to be rather difficult. The work of the military men may hardly be considered in terms of economic categories. Most frequently, the costs saving gained from reduction of the screened and

deemed inadequate students of military educational institutions and training units is under evaluation. In addition, financial benefits from reduction of the training time may be taken into account. The most important result of professional selection, i.e. the improvement of professional skills in the officers, their qualitative characteristics has no financial and economic equivalents so far.

The most difficult task is the estimation of efficiency of selection in higher military educational institutions. A principle of "ultimate result" once again remains the major factor. However, this is supplemented with a series of intermediate stage progress evaluation. The first stage deals with the forecast correctness for the primary psychological adaptation of the cadets at the first grade level. The major selection efficiency parameter here is the reduction of dismissal (as general, so and on professional impracticability). At the subsequent grades, the extents of progress and disciplined behavior are determined. And, finally, at the last grade, the final conclusion on suitability of the prospective officers to their future service is decided upon. Subsequently, this is matched to the data of the service record, which is requested by the educational institution manager for every graduate with one-year experience as an officer.

One of the efficient results of selection application in the professional staff for the Armed Forces of Ukraine is the system of pre-higher education special training (2 to 4 years) of young men in conditions of military lyceums, the pedagogical opportunities and special organization of the student's activity of which promote not only the unbiased selection of the young men for the full-time military service and professional orientation, but also form the professionally important qualities for activity under intense and difficult conditions. Our experience testifies to preferability of such form of training for the prospective officers. So, for instance, only 5-7% of the military lyceum graduates is dismissed from the higher military schools owing to the professional inadequacy. At the same time, the number of cadets dismissed owing to professional inadequacy among those arrived to their military colleges immediately after graduation from the school, ranges from 24% to 42%. The analysis of the commander response testifies to the quality of professional activity of the officers during their first year of service in favor of the former lyceum students who are characterized by high adaptive abilities, strong professional skills and abilities.

However, noticing the high efficiency of professional selection and its expediency for certain officer specialties, we take into account the fact that professional selection in itself is not a unique means to maintenance of high quality and efficiency of the military work, efficiency of battle application of military machinery, prevention of accidents and traumatism in the military men. It may not replace experts' training, their education, instruction, ensuring the rational regimens of work and rest, safe and healthy production environment, creation of the new technical systems and arms with high ergonomic characteristics, group and individual protection of the military experts against impact of the harmful factors, etc.

Nevertheless, our experience in the professional officer selection organization reveals that the careful scientific, methodical, and material provision of selection activities enables achievement of rational distribution of the recruits and military men by specialties and recruitment of military educational institutions with the cadets on the basis of the comprehensive personal estimation, so that to boost the productivity of draft resources and quality of the officers training.